

## [Content]

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Teen And Up Audiences

### Archive Warning:

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### Fandom:

僕のヒーローアカデミア | Boku no Hero Academia | My Hero Academia

### Relationships:

Eri & Midoriya Izuku, Chisaki Kai | Overhaul & Eri, Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead & Midoriya Izuku, Dabi & Midoriya Izuku

### Characters:

Midoriya Izuku, Eri (My Hero Academia), Bakugou Katsuki (mentioned), Chisaki Kai | Overhaul (mentioned), Kurono Hari | Chronostasis (mentioned), Tsukauchi Naomasa, Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead, Dabi (My Hero Academia)

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Morally Grey Midoriya Izuku, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Implied/Referenced Character Death, Quirkless Midoriya Izuku, Midoriya Izuku Does Not Have One for All Quirk, Smart Midoriya Izuku, Strong Midoriya Izuku, BAMF Midoriya Izuku, Cute Eri (My Hero Academia), Fluff and Angst, Mild Hurt/Comfort, Vigilante Midoriya Izuku, Dabi is a Todoroki, Dabi is Todoroki Touya, Complete, Alternate Universe - Coffee Shops & Cafés, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Midoriya Izuku's Hair Is Fluffy Because It's Full Of Secrets

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English

### Series:

Part 1 of Net Neutrality

### Collections:

zo's best fics to know & share, Creative Chaos Discord Recs, Got 99 problems but these ain't one, If I ever had a will to write it would be because of these fics, Katya's Korner Fic Recs, Mha heart mah soul, Genius bnha fanfics, Fave Fics Found, Real Good Shit, DerangedDeceiver's Favorite Fics, completed and read, fics i wanna hold hands with, Bnha Bookclub Discord Recs, Speaker's must-reads, BNHA to read, bnha fics☆[], FreakingAmazingFics, FinishedBooks, Fics that soothe my soul at 4am, elian's favorites < 3, Pthaloteal, 📚 Fanfic Forum Discord Recs, Finished Fics (bnha), jrmuffin's favorites, Finished Fics That Made Me Cry, fics to sink your teeth into, gothelixar recs, hmm I guess I'll just cry about it (BNHA), ❤️[] All-Time Favorites ❤️[], Vaguely Organized Crime Fics, Good soup, Villain\_vigilante\_stories, Finished favourites, Best BNHA Fics, Best, ♡ I don't have a personal life ♡, An1m4sh's Favourites, Storycatchers' pile of heroic hero stuff, Flashfreeze Recs, Adore Able's Server MHA Vigilante!Izuku Collection, The Collossally Curious Collection of Carefully Curated Stories, ♡ BNHA FICS I LOVE ♡, \* + .. .\* ♡ The Favoured Ones ♡ \* .. + \*, bookworx26's marvelous collection of BNHA fics, BNHA FICS I'm married to ❤️♂, (mostly) just some funky lil Izu fics, Fics that somehow keep me alive, mha fics that are my will to live, Dkn

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# [Content]

by [Teobot](#)

## Summary

For all that the heroes save them,  
For all that the villains harm them,  
For all that the world allows them,  
There is not a thing that slips  
Between the boy and his ward.

-

Midoriya Izuku finds solace in the death of Chisaki Kai, even if it has come far more quickly than he anticipated. Next time, he'll have to give himself a bit longer. A chance to draw it out.

Pity.

At least Eri is safe now.

## Notes

hi and welcome to my first fic in this fandom have fun

# Chapter 1

## Chapter Notes

Edited 3.19.20

Izuku is 13 when he meets the first man he's ever felt true, murderous rage for. His name is Chisaki Kai, and the little girl he's tugging around behind him like a dog is somewhere around four years old and far too thin to be anywhere near healthy. The feeling that ignites in his chest is surprising, and overwhelming, and somehow not as disgusting as he thought it'd be. He sees Chisaki Kai and understands, just a little bit, why some people turn sour.

He reports it to the police, and they tell him that they'll 'look into it.'

He tells a sidekick from the local hero agency, and they say that the police will be fine without their help.

He sees the man around more times than he can count, so obviously whatever the police are doing isn't working.

So he decides something very important.

If the police can't do anything, then a Hero has to. But when the Heroes can't do anything, *won't* do anything?

Something has to change.

So he goes online and finds an article. An article about something called 'Vigilantism'.

He remembers Kacchan talking about vigilantes once. He remembers disliking the idea. He remembers filing the idea away for later.

And he weighs his choices. He could break the law, kill Chisaki Kai, and save the white-haired, wide-eyed little girl. Or he could save his dream of becoming the first quirkless pro hero, leave it to the police, and trust that everything will be okay.

His choice is obvious, really. He starts planning a rescue.

-

It takes six months to plan, and it is underwhelmingly, disappointingly

easy to kill Chisaki Kai, alias Overhaul, leader of the Shie Hassaikai. Underwhelmingly easy to break in at two am, slip into his room, and drive a stiletto knife through his eye. Same with Kurono Hari, alias Chronostasis, keeper and main caretaker of the girl.

It's easier still to work through the rooms, into the facility, under the facility, through the doctors who haven't spent the last seven months training their bodies, and to the door of her room.

It's... hard to open the door. He doesn't want to scare her, doesn't want to open the door and see her afraid of him. She shouldn't be afraid of him, but she will be and he doesn't know if he can take someone as young as her, as innocent as her, looking at him with fear in her eyes.

It's hard to open the door. He does it anyways.

Inside, she is sitting up, looking at the door in terror. Looking at *him* in terror, and he pulls the black surgical mask he's wearing down under his chin. He slowly, ever so slowly, sits down just outside the doorway, criss-cross applesauce. He looks up at her.

"Hi," he says. Quietly, because he will never raise his voice at her. "My name is Izuku. I'm here to rescue you."

Her eyes keep the fear, but there's a touch of curiosity now.

"I came here just for you," he continues, "and I made sure everybody stays quiet while we go. You don't have to worry about anything, I'll make sure we get out of here real quick." He shifts the bag on his side to a more comfortable position, and looks around the barren room. "Do you have anything here you want to keep?"

She shakes her head, just the tiniest bit, but it's an answer.

"Okay." He smiles gently, standing up slowly. "That's fine. I have to get some things from the lab. Do you want to come with me or stay here until I get back?" Because he will come back, if he needs to.

Her indecision is palpable. She doesn't want to go the the lab, that's obvious, but she doesn't want to risk him leaving and not coming back. He'll wait until she has an answer.

She gets out of her bed, and it seems she has decided.

She's barefoot, and her legs have bandages on them. Same with her

arms, and the horn on her head has grown bigger since the last time he saw her. Something to do with her quirk, then. She walks over to him slowly, and flinches when he stretches his hand out. She doesn't look at him when she puts her hand in his, and she's silent still when he leads her down the only path he left un-bloodied.

The lab is full of strange, useful machines. Strange, useful data that he uploads to a thumbdrive. Strange, useful vials of a clear liquid that won't go bad, thanks to the quirk of one of the yakuza that allowed anything she touched to keep indefinitely. So says the report on the box, at least. Strange, useful things that go into his duffle bag, filling it up to the point that he knows if he hadn't spent the last while working on muscle conditioning, he wouldn't be able to carry it.

She is silent the entire time. She doesn't look at him, she doesn't talk to him, and she shivers when he sets her on a table so he can move around and keep her in his line of sight.

She seems surprised when he lifts her off the table and onto his hip, her arms automatically curling around his neck. He's not sure if she's surprised because he didn't hurt her or because she's never been held before. Neither would surprise him, but it's still disheartening. It still makes him sad.

Which alerts him to the fact that throughout this entire process, he hasn't felt a damn thing other than affection, worry, and sadness. He's felt nothing for the scores of people upstairs, lying in their beds or on the floors, bleeding from bullet wounds and slit throats. No anxiety, no fear, no panic. Just disdain and a muted sense of justice.

Oh well. He'll psychoanalyze himself later, when she's safe in a bed that isn't underground, in a yakuza torture compound.

He carries her all the way out of the basement, up through the halls, and stops in front of Chisaki Kai's room.

"This is his room. Do you want to see him before you go?"

The little girl lifts her head up from his shoulder and looks to the door. She turns her back to face him and shakes her head, eyes down.

"Okay," he says easily. "We'll go now, then." He starts to make his way to his entrance point. "We're going to go to my house." He slips out of the window, keeping hold of her and the bag. "I have some money saved up to buy you a bed, get you some clothes, whatever you want." They're out of the complex now, and his surgical mask back

up. He shifts a bit and pulls out a black beanie, then hands it to her.

Softly, gently, he gathers up her hair and piles it on top of her head.

“Here, pull it over your hair. We don’t want people seeing you right now.” He smiles, even though she’s not looking at him. “It’s a shame we have to cover up your pretty hair, though.”

He walks them to the train station. The duffel bag is digging into his shoulder, with all its damning evidence, and it’s not too heavy, but it’s definitely not ideal.

“Rest your head on my shoulder, it’ll take a bit to get home.” His eyes rove her face, and he sees exhaustion and traces of fear written all over her. “It’s safe to sleep. I’ll keep you safe, I promise.”

She sets her head down too easily. She probably won’t fall asleep until she’s made sure he’s not going to hurt her, and he accepts that. He just wants to get her home and tucked in.

He steps onto the train and it pulls away from the station.

# Chapter 2

## Chapter Summary

I'm love one (1) emotionally unstable boy

## Chapter Notes

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See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It's early when they get home. He puts her in his bed, tucks her in, and takes the couch. The next morning, while the little girl is sleeping, he turns on the news and it cuts to a helicopter shot of the Shie Hassaikai headquarters. The reporter, a disgruntled looking man with red skin and sharp teeth, is describing the scene before him.

"Official police reports say that the attack took place early this morning, leaving no one alive. Police and heroes had been investigating this particular group for some time, but it seems that someone beat them to their goal." The feed from the helicopter expands to fill the screen. Then, it cuts to an average-looking man in his mid-30s, wearing a trench coat and a fedora. Izuku thought those went out of style in the early 2000s, but apparently not. The flavor text underneath him reads 'Detective Tsukauchi Naomasa', and Izuku memorizes his face.

"There is substantial evidence that something was taken from the site, but we don't yet know what. We also don't know what quirk this vigilante character has, but we suspect that it's an emitter somewhat like the R-Rated Hero: Midnight's quirk, Somnambulist." Izuku stifles a laugh, turning up the volume as he readies breakfast. Tsukauchi continues, brow furrowing into some semblance of a scowl. Poor guy. At least it's sunny out today.

"We've been investigating this group for three months, and then this happens. We don't know, and we don't know how, but we're going to get to the bottom of it. And if you're watching this—" Tsukauchi turns to the camera and Izuku leans forward, pressing his stomach against the counter to the point where it's uncomfortable.

"Yeah?" he breathes. "What are you gonna do?"

"-we'll find you. And we'll put you away."

The screen goes black, the remote in his hand. He leans back.

Midoriya Izuku stands in his kitchen, making breakfast, and shakes his head, smiling.

“You won’t. But good luck, Detective.”

### Chapter End Notes

This one's short, but the next chapter is a good deal longer, I promise!

# Chapter 3

## Chapter Summary

Our two (2) good kids talk

## Chapter Notes

Timeline stuff!

Izuku (13) began seeing Eri (3) late in June of year X.

July 15th passed, and he turned 14 and convinced Mommadoriya to move to America with Hisashi.

Fast forward 6 months, and it's late December, right around X-mas, so Eri has just turned 4.

Two weeks have passed, so now it's January.

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See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

She does not understand him.

His name is Izuku - Midoriya Izuku - and he does not make sense.

Eri is four now. She knows that because she heard Mr. Kurono say it to Father. She knows lots of things.

She knows that her quirk is evil, because Father told her so. She knows that she is a bad girl, because Father told her so. She knows that she isn't really a person. She's just a tool to help erase quirks. Quirks are dirty. Father told her so. And everybody listens to Father.

But Midoriya doesn't say that. And now she doesn't know what to do. She knows how to clean, because she had to do that at Father's house. But she can't find any brooms, she can't find the spray that makes her hands itch and her chest burn. And she doesn't want to ask Midoriya, because she should *know* where the cleaning supplies are.

Useless. Evil, stupid, useless Eri.

-  
Her name is Eri.

He knows because it's the only thing she's said to him in the two

weeks they've lived together. She responds to yes and no questions with nods and shakes of her head, but other than that it's radio silence.

Their house - because it's theirs now, not just his - is set up above a little café that he runs. Mom and him used to run it together, but once he decided to rescue Eri, he convinced her to go live with Dad in America. He's 14 now, and they've been running the café for years. That combined with the money Dad still sends over is enough to convince her that yes, he'll be fine, Mom.

She took his argument with little resistance and kissed his forehead with a sad kind of relief.

Sighing, he sprawls out on the couch. He needs to talk to Eri.

He takes a minute to think out what he'll say, and lifts himself from the couch with a groan. Eri's room is one door down from his - okay, it used to be his room - but since Mom moved out, he transferred his things to the master bedroom.

He knocks on her door and waits. He's not going to open it, and he's *never* going to enter without her permission. He should ask if she wants a lock on it, in case it'd make her feel safer.

Eri, sweet baby Eri, opens the door looking like she just woke up. Her hair's a mess, and her shirt is... well, actually, it's his shirt and it pools on the ground, and her eyes are droopy with sleep. A rush of affection sweeps through him and he beams at her. She looks up at him and doesn't meet his eyes - he's noticed that she never meets his eyes - and he squats down so she doesn't have to crane her neck.

"Hey, Eri." His smile softens and his heart melts some more. "Good morning."

She nods and her tiny hands grip what is now her shirt tightly.

"I was wondering if we could talk. There's some stuff I haven't gotten around to explaining yet, and I want to make sure we're on the same page."

Her brow furrows a bit, but she nods again. Stepping out of her room, she falls in step a bit behind him, so he slows. He makes sure not to lose his smile, even if it droops a bit under his concern. He's not leading her around, they're going together. So he starts with that.

“Eri, do you remember my name?”

She nods.

“It’s Midoriya Izuku, right? It’s not Chisaki Kai.” She flinches at the name, but he needs her to understand. “Eri, you’re human, not a dog. You can walk next to me, not behind me. Nobody will get mad at you for that. I promise.”

She hesitates for a second, and then nods again.

-

She doesn’t understand. She hasn’t been useful the entire time she’s been here, and he’s telling her that she can walk next to him? He’s... he’s wrong. She’ll just get in the way.

“Eri, can I pick you up for a second? Is that okay?”

Eri nods, because it *is* okay, and his arms are warm, and even if it weren’t okay, she’d still have to nod or else Father would hurt her-

Izuku’s arms are warm. Warm and soft and nice and she really wants to cry. She’s making him dirty, and he doesn’t even know it. And she’s not telling him, so that makes her evil. She’s con-contan-contanimat-contaminating him.

(In the small place in the back of her head, she’s wanted Izuku to pick her up again so much, but she knows not to ask for things. Greedy girls get punished.)

Izuku sets her on a chair. They’re in the kitchen, now, and she’s in the chair he calls hers. It’s got a bunch of pillows on it, because she’s too small to reach the table without them. He moves around to the stove and she watches him move. He’s spinning around and tapping his feet and his arms are going all sorts of places, and it’s very silly. She doesn’t know what he’s doing, but... she wants to do it, too.

“Eri,” and she startles out of her thoughts as Izuku sets a plate of something that smells wonderful and a spoon in front of her, “I wanted to talk with you. Is right now an okay time?”

He’s asking her? Mr. Kurono and Father didn’t ask her things, they just did them even when they hurt really badly and she didn’t like them-

*Eri, do you remember my name?*

That's right. This is Izuku. Not Mr. Kurono. Not Father.

She nods her head, and with every bit of confidence she doesn't have, she squeaks out a, "Yes."

And Izuku *beams* at her like she's taken all the bright out of the sun and given it to him.

"Wonderful! Okay, just let me get my plate and we can talk." Izuku hops over to the counter, serving himself while she hesitantly pokes what she thinks is a chunk of egg with her spoon. She hasn't tried these yet. Izuku makes her breakfast every morning, and it's always something different. First it was pancakes, then waffles, then french toast, then cereal, then soup, and now eggs. She scoops up a piece and brings it up to her mouth (and she can't see him, but Izuku is very focused on her reaction), popping it in.

She's... she's never had *anything* like this before. It's soft and warm and fluffy and cheesy and it's a bit spicy, but it's so yummy! She starts shoveling the eggs into her mouth with her spoon, making sure to eat quickly before she has to give her plate back. Of course, Izuku hasn't ever taken her plate if she's not done eating, but it's only a matter of time.

*He's not Father.*

She twists in her seat to face Izuku, and his smile erases the bad that bubbles in her stomach. Her lips curve up and she can't look him in the eyes yet, but she'll work on it. "Thank you," she mumbles.

"Of course, Eri. Anything for you, bug." He sits down with his plate, bringing the pan to the table and putting it down on a hot pad. He waits for her to push her plate to him before he loads it up with more eggs, and then he gives it back to her.

That's another strange thing he does. When she finishes with her food, he always makes sure to ask if she wants more. When he first did it, she almost cried. She thought it was a trick question. Of course she was still hungry. Was she going to risk getting punished over it? No, she was not. She was going to be hungry no matter what, so it didn't do her any favors to be hungry *and* hurt.

And then he had piled more food on her plate, set it down in front of her, and asked her to eat more.

She doesn't understand him, but she really, *really* likes him.

"So what I wanted to talk about was how we're going to work together."

Oh.

She looks down, and her heart breaks just a little bit. She's going to be put to work now, she knows. She got time to get used to a new place, but it seems the calm is over now. She should learn not to hope for good things.

Izuku keeps on talking, and she focuses on him instead of the ache in her chest.

"I've got a place downstairs where I work. It's a coffee house, and we live here because I own it. I have to be down there a lot, so I wanted you to know that if you want to go down there too, you can." Izuku stops to take a bite. "Now, there's some other stuff too. Eri, this is really important, okay, You gotta listen really carefully and remember this."

She doesn't look him in the eye, but she does look up. Now he's going to tell her to clean the house and give blood and even if she isn't going to be hungry, she still doesn't like being hurt. She'll be hungry if it means not being hurt, and she thought that Izuku wasn't like Mr. Kurono and Father! And he said that he isn't, but what if he's lying? What if he-

"You don't have to do anything you don't want to do."

Her breath leaves her.

What?

"You don't have to clean, you don't have to be hungry, you don't have to do anything you don't want. If that means you don't talk, then that's fine. If that means you don't look me in the eyes, that's fine. If that means we buy all your clothes online, that's fine. If that means you don't come down into the coffee house, that's fine. If that means you're in the coffee house all the time, that's fine. If you want to go on runs with me, that's fine. If you don't, that's fine too."

She doesn't get it. He looks at her and reads her mind or something, because his face goes from serious to sweet. His eyes are green and sad and his face is so heart-wrenchingly open that she wants to

scream, because he's nice and she doesn't want him to stop being nice.

*Please, she wants to say. Please don't trick me. My heart hurts a lot, please don't make it hurt more. I couldn't take it if you were bad like Father.*

"Eri, bug," and his voice is so soft, "you're not here to work. You're not here to do anything for me. You're here to be happy and peaceful and not-hungry. I want you to feel safe here, and I want you to have fun. You don't have to justify yourself by being unhappy. You don't have to be useful for me to care about you, bug. I promise."

Oh no, she's going to cry. She's going to cry and he'll be disgusted because she'll get the table dirty and then all of his words will turn into ashes and he'll be mad like everyone else-

"I also promise that I'll never hit you, Eri. I'll never yell at you. I'll do my best to make sure that you're comfortable here. If you wanna live somewhere else, that's fine. If you want me to go away, for a little bit or forever, that's fine."

Why is he so nice to her? She wants to rage at him and scream until he gets mad and breaks his promises (because he will, she knows it, everyone breaks their promises), she wants to laugh and hug him and have him say more things that make her heart ache (because she won't have this for long), she wants to cry until her tears wash away the entire world and it's just her, all alone, safe in a bed that she doesn't deserve (a voice in the back of her head that sounds like Izuku says yes, *you deserve the bed, Eri, bug, you deserve the world*).

Her heart says, *please stop, I don't know what to do. Don't leave me, don't leave me, please don't hate me, I'm sorry, I'm sorry I just don't understand, I don't think that you should be nice to me, I think I'm dirty, I don't know what to think-*

"If you need anything, I'll get it for you. I promise I'll be better than Chisaki Kai—" she flinches at Father's name, "-or Kurono, or any of them. Okay?"

She nods, and then she bursts into tears.

"Thank you," she whispers, over and over again, sobbing into her hands. She hears Izuku getting up and then he kneels next to her.

"Eri, can I hug you?"

She nods harshly, wailing when he wraps her up in his arms. She threads her arms around his waist and focuses on the *warm safety love* that surrounds her as he lifts her from her chair and into his lap. She's never going to tell him to go. She's going to hang on to Izuku forever, and she hopes that he'll hang on to her forever, too.

### Chapter End Notes

Eri: okay thanks Izuku i'm gonna go back to my room now thanks for breakfast

Izuku \*choking back tears\*: alright sounds nice i'm gonna bake you every single sweet in the known world

# Chapter 4

## Chapter Notes

hello my offering is small but i like it and i hope you do too

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See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

After their talk, it takes three months for her to look him in the eye. It happens one late night in the coffee house, where she whips around from watching the fireplace to grin at him.

“Izuku! It - the fire! It made a shape like a flower!”

He meets her eyes from over by the counter and grins right back. His eyes look like stars in the flickering light.

His voice is as warm as his heart is as warm as the fire. “Awesome! What did the flower look like?”

-

It’s May 12th now, she knows. Izuku bought a calendar a bit ago and put it up behind the counter so that she knows what day it is (because he taught her the days of the week and the months and the seasons and also numbers, and he’s going to teach her even more than that).

It’s May 12th and she asks him about the things he took from the lab, because she knows now that he won’t get mad at her for asking questions. And he sits her on his knee and tells her about how the machines in his office work, and what he’s done with the numbers on the papers, and how her quirk makes it work.

“I’m working on making temporary quirk suppressants,” he tells her. “They’ll help people whose quirks hurt them or make them scared, like yours. See what they do is-” and he goes on about how different strengths of the suppressants can weaken the quirk, completely nullify it, or remove it altogether.

“I’m not going to give anyone that one,” he tells her. He’s very serious right now. “It’s dangerous, and I should probably destroy the sample, but I’m not going to. Do you know why I’m keeping it, bug?”

She shakes her head. She doesn't know, but she's absolutely sure that his reason will make sense. His reasons always make sense, and he always explains his ideas to her so that she can understand him.

"I'm keeping it because if somebody comes after you, I need to protect you. If I have to take away their quirk to do so, then I will."

She gets it. The idea of someone taking her from Izuku crawls into her lungs and tries to choke her, but she knows that Izuku will protect her. He rescued her. He's her and she's his. She understands. She knows that if somebody comes after Izuku, she'll break the world to keep him safe.

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Eri learns what a birthday party is on July 15th, and she loves it with all her heart.

Izuku is now 15 years old, and he closes up the shop for the day so that they can spend time together. Izuku takes her into the kitchen and sits her up on the counter, giving her tastes of a thing called cake batter in its various stages as he mixes it all up. And then, when it's all mixed up and put into the pan, she helps him push it into the oven! It's hot and it scares her for a second, but Izuku's right there to make sure she doesn't slip and burn herself.

It's the first time she's helped him in the kitchen with baking something, but she's glad that this is the first thing that she's done.

Mrs. Midoriya and her husband, Mr. Midoriya, are talking to Izuku and her through a computer. Their faces are squished together and they're both smiling very nicely at her, laughing at the jokes Izuku's making and asking her how she likes her life with Izuku.

She loves it.

They were surprised when Izuku called them and she showed up with him on the screen, but Mrs. Midoriya had apparently immediately decided that Eri was a part of the family now. (Izuku had called his mom prior and explained that he found her crying on the street a couple of weeks ago, and that she was an orphan with nowhere to go. Midoriya Inko, not one to beat around the bush, had told him to take care of her, and that they'd start sending more money.)

The oven beeps, and Izuku grins.

“Alright, bug, I’m going to need to do this part, but can you get me the hotpad? Oh, and set it on the counter right-” he grunts with the weight of the cake in its dish, and she holds the hotpad over her head like a torch, “-over here, thank you bug!” She plops the hotpad down on the white counter and Izuku sets down the cake, heaving out an exaggerated sigh.

“Wow,” he exclaims, “that’s a lot of cake!” He looks over at her and his eyes are sparkling. “I think,” he starts, wiggling his eyebrows at her as she giggles, “that we’re gonna have to eat as much as we can tonight, and then have cake for breakfast tomorrow.”

Eri gasps, eyes lighting up, and starts jumping up and down in place.

“Really?”

Izuku nods with a self-satisfied grin. “Yup!”

Eri stops jumping for a second and looks around, eyes wide. She creeps closer to Izuku, and tugs on his shirt. He crouches down and slowly reaches up, smoothing her hair down when she nods.

“What’s up, bug?” he whispers.

Eri twists her hands into her dress, eyebrows furrowing with worry.

“Is-is that allowed? Nobody will get mad?”

“Oh, bug.” Izuku opens his arms up for a hug and she snuggles up to him on the kitchen floor. “Nobody’ll get mad, I promise.” In warm arms, Eri knows that Izuku won’t lie to her.

“Okay,” she whispers. “Cake for breakfast.”

“Wonderful,” he whispers back, laughing into her hair. “Can I pick you up?” And with her nod, Izuku swings her up onto his hip and dances them around the counter to the cooking rack.

Mrs. and Mr. Midoriya are waiting patiently on the counter, chatting to each other about something Eri can’t quite hear, and they smile when she and Izuku come back into the camera’s view.

“Alright,” Izuku announces, making his voice deep and silly. “It is now time... to frost the cake!” Eri and Mr. and Mrs. Midoriya clap, impressed, and Izuku explains how he’s going to frost the cake.

“First we have to get it out of the pan. Eri?” She nods. “Do you

remember that greasy stuff we spread all over the pan before we put the batter in?" She nods again. "Well, that's non-stick baking spray and it makes the cake not stick to the pan. So what we have to do is take our little plastic spatula doohickey," he produces said doohickey with a flourish, "and loosen up the sides. Watch this."

And Eri watches, mystified, as Izuku gently pushes the spatula between the cake and the edges of the pan.

Izuku looks over at her and smiles. "My esteemed assistant, would you like to try?"

Eri straightens up, takes a big breath, and nods.

The cake is ready. Sitting on a plate, covered in cream cheese frosting and sprinkles and icing that spells 'Izuku and Eri', it looks amazing. Mr. Midoriya (she calls him that and he immediately says, "Call me Hisashi, dear.") That prompts Mrs. Midoriya to say, "Oh, and just call me Inko, please.") calls for pictures as soon as they've got everything ready.

Izuku takes out his phone, sets it propped up against a pile of science textbooks, and presses record. Right at home, everyone sings happy birthday to Izuku. Then, they sing happy birthday to Eri.

At her surprise, Izuku beams at her and smooths down her hair.

"Because we haven't gotten to celebrate your birthdays before, we'll give you as many of them as we can now, so we can get caught up!" He holds out his arms and when Eri scoots over into them, he pulls her up into his lap. Mrs. Inko and Mr. Hisashi croon over them and lament at not being able to be there in person.

"Mom, Dad, don't worry! It's a lot of money for plane tickets, and we're fine over here. And anyways, I've got Eri to keep me in check!" Izuku lifts her up a bit and she grins, laughing. This is *good*.

"If you're sure, honey," Inko sighs. She rests her cheek in her hand and smiles softly. "I'm glad you two found each other. I was worried about my little boy all alone! But," and she looks directly at Eri now, "I can see that he's in good hands."

Oh, Eri's gonna cry. If Mrs. Inko thinks that Eri is good enough to take care of Izuku, then she must be.

Izuku dishes up two pieces of cake onto one plate (because it'd be a waste to have two plates, Eri's on his lap, Mom), and they dig in. Everyone waits with bated breath as Eri takes her first bite; a big bite of carrot cake and a healthy amount of cream-cheese frosting (an American recipe that Mom sent over - more sugar than Izuku's ever seen a recipe call for) that she shoves in her mouth.

She chews, swallows, and doesn't say anything as she scoops up another bite and shoves it into her mouth, same as the first. She swallows again, turns to look up at Izuku, and he *melts* at her expression.

"It's so good, oh my gosh Izuku!" Big red eyes shine up at him and she's got frosting on her cheek, holy shit she's *adorable*, and neither of them see the older Midoriyas exchange a soft look.

"Well, sweet pea," Mrs. Midoriya starts, "we have to go. I hope both of you have a wonderful day, and happy birthday again, Izuku. Your present should be coming in the mail soon, I hope you like it!"

Izuku looks at his mom and smiles at her. Her cheeks are rosy with affection, and she looks healthier and happier than she's ever been, even when they took care of the café together. Her hair and eyes are shinier, and his dad looks really, *really* happy.

Izuku smiles warmly. "Mom, I'm sure I'll love it. Thanks for calling, and I'll talk to you guys on Sunday." Eri waves goodbye, mouth stuffed with cake, as Izuku clicks the end call button. He picks up his phone and shuts it off, then closes his laptop.

"That was fun," says Eri, licking her lips. "I like Mrs. Inko and Mr. Hisashi. They're nice." She's back to facing the plate now, and she can't see how his face softens. He really loves her.

Izuku grins - because wow, he didn't realize how amazing this was going to be. How amazing life would be once Eri was allowed to be herself. He's so lucky to have her. He's so amazingly, incredibly glad that he got to her before anyone could hurt her more than they already had.

I'm glad you like them, bug." He rests his chin on top of her head. "You know," he whispers conspiratorially, "I think they like you too." He goes to get a bite of cake on his fork and finds that there's no more on the plate. "Woah, bug! That's a lot of cake you just had!" He grins

and pats her head, reaching for the plate. “You want another piece?”

Eri nods vigorously, and Izuku dishes up another piece. “Alright. Cake now, then sleep, then more cake for breakfast.”

Eri wiggles in the seat - she moves over so he can sit down and then clammers back onto her lap, and soft chants of ‘cake, cake, cake, cake’ reach his ears. “After all, we’ve got some work to do tomorrow in the shop! We can’t disappoint our customer!”

## Chapter End Notes

Timeline! Okay, so the first segment is set in late March, the second is in May, and then we skip to July, and Izuku’s birthday. I love my boy and his kiddo.

(The ‘customer’ is absolutely Aizawa. Holy shit I’m excited to show you guys the next installment of the series oh my god)

Tell me what you would like me to write about these kids, please. The next chapter will be the end of the “official” story, but you and I both know that there’s more fluff to be had from these good babies

# Chapter 5

## Chapter Notes

this just in i'm a dirty fucking liar there's one more chapter after this one before we move on

this one's for rapidtiger girl123 for suggesting the park scene  
thank you

TW: the first bit is a nightmare scene, it goes until the first dash if you want to skip it

Edited 3.19.20

Izuku wakes up and he *doesn't* scream. It's a very close thing.

Oh, he wants to. He feels it building up in his throat and bubbling over his tongue, but he keeps his lips sealed shut.

His eyes mistake the shadows cast on the walls for bodies. The black bleeds into red, and blood drips over his hands. It fills up his lungs and drains into his stomach and out of his ears - it's sticky and wet and warm and he's killed a *lot* of people.

His dream lingers in his mind. It's tattooed to the underside of his eyelids, flaring up every time he blinks.

He ignores the blood, and closes his eyes again.

*It's dark. It's dark and he can't see, and then suddenly Eri is there.*

*She's in the nightgown he found her in, arms all bandaged up and horn too big for her head. Her right eye is bleeding (that's where he stabbed Chisaki Kai-) and she's riddled with bullet wounds (every single place he shot a guard or scientist-).*

*"Deku," she says, and he flinches. He hasn't heard that name in a long time - where'd she hear it?*

*"Deku," she says again. "Why did you hurt me?"*

*He's confused. He hasn't hurt her - no, he promised not to hurt her, to never yell at her or lay a harming hand upon her. He hasn't hurt her.*

*Has he?*

*No. He hasn't. He won't, he promised and he keeps his promises.*

*"Eri? Bug, I don't know what you mean." He starts walking towards her - why's she so far away? "Can you tell me what I did? Are you okay? Why are you in your nightgown?"*

*He reaches her and kneels down. Her eyes are full of tears, and she latches onto his arm.*

*"Why did you hurt me?" she repeats. He looks up from her teary face - there has to be someone who can help - and there are bodies, all around them. All of the scientists lie like river stones, scattered and stacked; and sat upon examination-table thrones are Chisaki Kai and Kurono Hari.*

*Kurono is very much dead.*

*Chisaki Kai is very much not.*

*He rises and Eri chokes on the fear that's threatening to strangle Izuku.*

*"Deku, why did you hurt me?"*

*He stands and nudges her behind him, hiding her from Kai. He's not shaking. He's not.*

*Kai stops just in front of him and he looks just like he did that first day on the streets. His mask is flush to his cheeks, gloved hands swaying by his sides, and his green coat hangs off of him like chains. His eyes are just as dead as they were before he died.*

*One gloved hand reaches up and rests on Izuku's cheek, and his muscles lock. The hand stays there. Kai's head tilts to the side as if asking a question, and once again Eri asks her question.*

*"Deku, why did you hurt me?"*

*Chisaki Kai grips his throat. Izuku can do nothing. Chisaki Kai reaches around him and grabs Eri by her hair. Izuku can do nothing. Chisaki Kai listens to Eri scream and watches her struggle as he lifts her up off her feet. Izuku can do nothing. Chisaki Kai kills him, and he doesn't know what happens to Eri after his vision goes dark.*

*Izuku can do nothing.*

*Izuku opens his eyes. He slips out of bed. He pays no mind to the*

shadows as he makes his way out of his room, blood sloshing around his ankles.

Izuku spends the rest of the night sitting outside Eri's room, eyes open and suffocating.

-

It's a week after Izuku's birthday and Eri wants to go outside. More than that, however, she wants Izuku to go with her.

The problem is, she doesn't know what people do outside.

She knows that people go outside. She knows that they go outside to have fun. She knows that there are fun things to do outside.

She just doesn't know what they are.

So she asks and Izuku looks up from the kitchen table, where he's got notebooks and textbooks all laid out and messy, and his eyes shine and he immediately sits up straight.

"Yes, yes, of course we can go outside, do you want to go right now or do you want to go tomorrow or, better than that, where do you want to go? I can take you any time, well outside of shop hours because I have work," and he doesn't seem to be running out of breath, she wonders how, "but any time I'm not working we can go! Oh, but also we'd have to not go at night, so that means we'd have to go during the day, and hours at the shop are flexible, so maybe I should set up a *time to go*—"

He cuts himself off abruptly, eyebrows drawing together as he looks at her.

"Do-do you have a place you want to go?" He looks so incredibly confused and delighted that she almost can't hold back the laugh bubbling up in her chest.

"Nope," she says, smiling. He nods and bites his lip.

"Okay," he says, shifting in his seat so that he can face her. "We can go to a shop, or we can go to a garden, or we can go to an arcade or a temple, which both might have a lot of people. Which sounds best?"

She draws a hesitant breath and steps forward, pulling herself into the chair next to him.

“What’s a park?”

Izuku’s eyes blow up wide, and his cheeks puff up as he goes red.

“Yes,” he whispers reverently. “I’m gonna take you to a park for the first time.”

It takes a week of planning on his part, but it’s finally here. The shops closed, after an apology to Mr. Aizawa (their only reliable customer), who just waved them off with a grunt. He’s got a picnic basket with a blanket, water, and pastries he’s made, and he’s *ready*.

Eri wakes up and he brushes her hair, helps her get dressed - shorts, a white tee that says ‘blue’, and sneakers - and then they’re off. It’s only a short walk to the park from their shop, so they forgo the bicycle and Eri takes her place sitting on his shoulders.

It’s about five minutes before Eri announces their arrival with a gasp and a squeal. She clambers down him and grabs his hand, pointing at the play structure.

“What’s that for?”

Izuku kneels down and gestures at each piece. “Well, that’s the slide, that’s the sandbox, that’s the money bars, that’s the seesaw, and those are the swings.”

Eri hums, eyebrows furrowing, and for a second Izuku feels like he made a mistake bringing her here. But then that second is over, because Eri looks at him and her eyes pierce his soul.

“Can I go on the swings, please?”

His heart swells and he nods, rising and walking with her over to the swings.

“Here, you sit on it,” he lifts her up onto the seat, “grab the chains so you don’t fall,” he places his hands loosely over hers on the chain, “and you pump your legs.” His hands go from hers to where the chain meets the seat. “Or, if you want, I could push you!” He can’t help the hope that colors his voice at the idea, and blushes a bit. “Mom used to do that for me before I learned how to swing by myself.”

Eri turns to look at him over her shoulder, smile bright and eyes wide

with excitement. “Yes, please!”

Izuku grins and pulls the swing back, and she’s *ready*. “Alright, bug, remember to hold on tight!” And then he pushes up the seat and her hands fly up to clutch the chains tighter and her eyes widen and her legs straighten out and she’s *flying!*

And then she swings back down, and Izuku *catches her* and swings her back up! This time she flies for longer, going even higher off the ground, and she lets out a breathless cry of joy. She laughs as she swings back and forth, alternating between flying and falling, being pushed and being caught. She doesn’t quite know when she starts crying, but her eyes overflow at her happiness and she’s so *happy* it could make her sprout wings.

It goes on for a lifetime. Flying, falling, flying, falling, and then Izuku slows her down, until her toes brush the grass beneath her. She’s trying to catch her breath, her chest trying to switch between laughing and crying, but she’s grinning like Izuku does. She sees him lean around the swing, eyes searching her face with his soft concern. The sun is high in the sky, and it casts gemstone shadows in his eyes.

He looks like an angel, and it’s not the first time she’s noticed it.

Her hands are shaky from gripping the swing chains so hard, but she still reaches out and touches his cheek, laughing as his face shifts from worry to love.

“Thank you,” she says. “Thank you.”

Izuku...

Papa brings a hand up and rests it lightly on hers - and he’s touching her, he’s not flinching away or disappearing, he’s kind and good and lovely - and smiles. “Of course, bug. Anytime.”

He lays down the blanket in the shade and sits down, rummaging through the wicker basket for water and pastries. Eri looks over from the sandbox with interest, her eyes still a bit red from crying. As he’s setting everything out, she gets up and sits down next to him.

“It’s lunchtime?”

He looks up and nods, wearing his softest smile. “Yup! We’ve got water, anpan, curry bread, apple danishes, and chocolate croissants. I say we eat savory before sweet, but what do you think?”

Eri makes a show of tilting her head, putting a finger up to her chin. “Hmmm.” She takes a big breath and looks him in the eyes very seriously. “I don’t know. I think I should get to eat the sweets first.” She looks at him carefully, taking in his theatrically shocked expression with a bit of worry, but any worry is squashed when he breaks into a laugh.

“Oh, oh my- that was- *bug*, I think Mom’s rubbed off on you!” His shoulders shake and he grasps at his stomach as he struggles for breath. “That was awesome,” he wheezes. He’s still shaking as he passes over an apple danish. She tears open the wrapper with relishes, biting down into the homemade pastry as she crumples the plastic into a ball and places it in Izuku’s waiting hand.

Incredibly pleased with herself and Izuku’s reaction, Eri gets up and drapes herself over his back, still munching on her pastry as Izuku breaks open his own curry bread.

“This is fun,” she murmurs, resting her head on his shoulder. “Can we do this again?”

Izuku swallows and reaches up to ruffle her hair. “Absolutely, *bug*. Any time you want.”

-

It’s August before Eri feels comfortable enough to go out shopping with him. Her horn has shrunk quite a bit, and paired with her hair (he asked about a haircut and she looked at him like she was going to cry, so he didn’t bring it up again) and her sweetheart eyes, she looks like an angel.

They head to the mall, taking the trains. It’s her second time on a train with him, and he watches as she spends it looking out the window and soaking in the scenery that flies by around her. It’s a beautiful day, he decides. It’s a good day.

The station they get off at is large, and there are a *lot* of people walking around, carrying bags and talking with friends. She clutches his hand like it’s the only thing keeping her from floating away, and he starts talking to her. Small, quiet things, like how the weather’s been and why it’s been like that, like how the buildings are built, and

where everything is. He points out the police box and waves to the officers, who smile and wave back. He talks about why there aren't any trash cans outside, he talks about the types of crepes the vendors sell, he talks about all the different kinds of UFO catchers, and he talks about how heroes work in crowded places. He can see when her anxiety wavers, and in its place comes curiosity.

They arrive at a huge building that's bustling with people.

"We're going to floor three," he tells her. "That's where the clothes will be." He grins at her and she manages a shaky grin back. "The ones that fit you, at least." And he takes her up an escalator, eyes darting over all the other people moving around.

Mutation quirk. Fire quirk. Minor mental quirk. Mutant quirk, frog. Water quirk. Oh, quirkless. Tactile quirk. Tactile quirk. Mutation quirk. Electricity quirk. Sound quirk. Mutation quirk.

They arrive at their floor, and Izuku takes her over to the first shop they'll be going into today. With the way her eyes light up, she seems to like it. They wander through the racks and shelves, peeking around at all the things. At her insistence, Izuku sets Eri on his shoulders so that she can see "more of the stuff, Papa!"

Oh.

She's called him papa. It takes a second for him to notice it, and she freezes.

Almost immediately, he bursts into tears. When she panics, he reaches up and pats her cheek, sniffling.

"They're happy tears, bug," he chokes out. "Promise."

He can't see her, but she nods. His promises are truths.

"Okay," she murmurs. "I believe you, Papa."

They end up leaving the mall with four bags of clothes and other assorted necessities, the most notable being a rainbow cat bean-bag chair, a rainbow unicorn hoodie, and a red and white smock dress with pockets in the front. On the train back, she sits next to him and leans into his side. He keeps an eye on their bags and an arm around her, absentmindedly tracing circles into her shoulder.

It's a good day.

# Chapter 6

## Chapter Summary

This isn't truly the last chapter, but the chapter after this won't be actual storyline, just a fluffy addendum

## Chapter Notes

Edited 3.19.20

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"I want to help you," she tells Papa. She knows that sometimes he goes out at night, and that he comes back bruised or bloodied. She knows that he can't go to school anymore because he has to watch after the shop. She knows that she costs money, and that even though he has a lot (or, at least, he says he does), she should try to help out sometimes. She's a big girl. Four entire years old, and only three more months until her fifth birthday.

"Okay, what do you want to help with?" Papa's hair is all messy (it always is), and his cheeks are flushed from the weekly house cleaning (she's not allowed to use the cleaners, so she makes everything look nice).

"I want to cook! And I want you to teach me how to make coffee! And bake! And I want to help clean, and-and-and I wanttopracticemyquirk!" She's bright red, she can feel it from her forehead to her toes, but she wants to help out! And part of helping out is being smart and safe, and it's being able to use her quirk in a way that isn't evil and bad. And Papa has been working on suppressants, so they can start small and work up until she's comfortable. She knows it.

"Alright, bug. I'd be happy to let you do more stuff around the house." Papa tips his head back and hums. "Let's see. For the cooking, you could help me with dinner, ah, three nights a week?" His head tilts to the side and she nods. "And then for the coffee and baking, you can help me in the café whenever you want, yeah?" His eyebrows raise and she nods again. Papa grins, and he looks sleepy. He was out late last night, she knows. "I don't think I want you using the chemicals to clean, so it'd probably be best if you keep making sure everything is tidy, okay?"

“Okay, Papa,” Eri says. If he doesn’t want her to do something, there’s a reason for it and she doesn’t do it. Easy-peasy.

“And for your quirk... why don’t you tell me about what you wanna do, bug?” He rolls over and flops on his belly, shifting around so his chin is resting on his arms.

Eri frowns, resting her cheek on her drawn-up knees as she thinks. “I want to be able to use my quirk.” She flushes, still a bit unused to conversations like this. “Um, I want to be able to control it, and I want to use it to help people. Well, um, to help *you*, because - because you come home sometimes and you have scrapes and bruises and I *know* that if I could control my quirk that I could make them go away,” oh, she’s running out of breath now, how does Papa do this, “and then you won’t feel so achy, because sometimes you move like I did, and I thought that if you use the sur-suppressants on me, then I would be able to use my quirk just a little bit and I wouldn’t be so scared and I could feel okay!” She gasps in a huge breath and wheezes, and she can feel all the red in her face. She doesn’t look at Papa, almost doesn’t want to see what his face looks like now that her mouth has run away from her.

She hears him shifting, moving his legs off of the sofa and making his way to where she’s scrunched up on the beanbag.

“Bug, can I sit next to you?” Soft, soft, Papa’s voice is always soft. Not hard, not angry, not mean, not like His. Never loud, just soft. His voice is as soft as his heart is as soft as he is.

“Yeah,” she whispers. He curls himself down next to her, sitting on the floor. He stretches his arm out behind her and leans towards her. He’s big and it makes her feel safe, because Papa is safe. He’s safe and he’s soft and she curls up into him.

“I didn’t know you were scared of your quirk. Of course I’ll help you with it.” He sighs and rests his head on hers. “But I don’t feel comfortable using the suppressants on you, because they’re meant for bad guys and you’re not a bad guy.” She nods. She shifts a bit and peeks up at him, and he’s looking at the wall. She looks at the wall too - at the picture he took of them at the park, the one where she’s sitting on the swing on his lap and he’s holding his phone in front of them. The bloom of love rooted in her chest flowers just a bit more.

“How about,” he says, “instead of using the suppressants, we start on small things, like plants. We’ll get a feel for your quirk, and then we’ll

move up from there. When we both feel comfortable with you practicing on me, you can try helping me out with my bumps and scrapes.

Papa shifts and looks at her, stroking her hair. She looks back at him. His eyes are shiny. That means his feelings are big, and her's are big right now too.

Her feelings right now feel like hope.

“Does that sound okay?”

She thinks it over. She rolls a ‘no’ around on her tongue, and finds that it doesn’t fit her lips.

“Yes,” she decides. “That’s okay.” And it is.

Papa sags against her a bit. His cheek rests against the crown of her head, mindful of her horn.

“Okay,” he says. “Thank you for telling me, bug. That was probably a bit scary.”

She nods. It was a little bit scary, but he’s not mad or anything like that. She can ask things and he’ll listen to her. That’s *good*.

“Yeah,” she whispers. “That was kinda scary. But now I can help more, so it wasn’t *too* scary.”

Papa laughs and sits up, stretching his arms up with a groan and oh, wow, his back pops like popcorn!

“Ooh,” Eri breathes out, turning to him, and she knows her eyes are glittering. “Do me, do me!”

Papa nods sagely, breaking into a grin as he hugs her and rolls his palms up her spine. Her back pops and shifts and she lets out a sigh of complete contentment, going boneless against him.

“Hmm,” Papa sighs, “that was a lot of thinking and emotions. Can I call for naptime, bug?”

She hums the affirmative and Papa rises from the floor very gracefully and swings her around once before falling on the couch with a *fwump*. She snuggles into his chest and closes her eyes. It’s easy to fall asleep when she’s listening to a safe heartbeat.

It's easy to fall asleep when she's with Papa.

Izuku tucks Eri into bed and closes her door quietly as he steps into the hall. After that, it's only a few steps to his room, where he keeps all of his undesirables. Undressing quickly, he slips easily into his... uniform - because really, that's the only thing he can call it. Black leggings under black shorts. Midnight blue sneakers with heel lifts. Black, cropped hoodie over blue, skin tight undershirt. Black surgical mask, black gloves. All of it wonderful, but his favorite piece has to be the blue backlit goggles he managed to fashion. He checks himself in the mirror, making sure everything is nice and tidy. Happy with what he sees, Izuku opens his window.

It's time to go out.

Since he took Eri in, he's been keeping up with his training. It's not difficult to wake up before she does, and it's not difficult to go out after she's asleep. He knows she'll be safe; he's made sure of it.

The height of his window gives him the perfect spot to jump roofs. He stretches his legs out in front of him as he drops, rolling into the impact with a quiet thud. He doesn't look back as he starts toward his intended destination for tonight, mapping out the route in his mind.

It's easy, especially since it's on the way to the bar.

It doesn't take him long to get to the spot he wants, and he crouches on the edge of the building. Here is where he's going to beat the tar out of an up-and-coming villain with a minor strength-enhancing quirk, and he's... well, maybe excited isn't the word, but he's somewhere near there. It isn't often that he's challenged, isn't often that he accepts any fights, and there's a chance that this guy might pose an actual threat.

(He won't. Smarts beat speed beat strength, and he's got all three in spades. He's kept himself in shape, in case anyone gets any bright ideas about Eri. This will be easy.)

As it turns out, it's a non-issue. It's disappointingly easy to slip through McFlannel's attacks (of which he begins the second he spots Izuku), seeing as he shouts them out. Literally. He's literally shouting out what he's going to do before he does it. And then he follows through with what he says he's going to do. And so Izuk puts him out of commission quickly with a few choice hits to his soft points, and

restrains him with the makeshift handcuffs he fashions out of the guy's shirt. He picks up the phone from McFlannel's back pocket and sends a quick text to the number he memorized off Detective Tsukauchi's little late-night intimidation from so long ago.

*Hey, Detective! I think you've been looking for this guy - he's the one who robbed the grocery store a week ago, right? He wasn't super hard to wrap up tho, so you might want to up your game if you ever intend to find that Shie Hassaikai vigilante you keep asking around for!*

*Love, Harbinger*

Izuku sends a location ping attached to the text, then snaps a picture of McFlannel and sends that, too.

It seems that the fight has passed by faster than Izuku anticipated, so he decides to hit up his infor hotspot: the small bar above Kitten, the local strip club. It's the place he goes when he has free time, and it helps that the people who know the name 'Harbinger' know where to go, and pay well for his services.

As he makes his way to the bar, he mulls over the fight. And then his mind drifts.

Is it bad of him to think that Kacchan taught him to fight? It's true. Izuku sighs as little flashes of *Deku!* and *useless* run circles in his head, and he can't help but agree with them. He is a Deku. He was useless. The only thing that's changed is that he has someone to be a Deku for. He has someone to and for whom he isn't useless. Eri has truly saved him. A rush of affection for her shakes him out of his little rut and he does a flip as he jumps a roof, just for her.

He arrives at the bar quickly. He slides through the open window quietly and gracefully, going through his breathing exercise once he's through. Nobody notices him. The plan tonight is to just get a glass of water, sit down in his spot, and maybe tell his *very* well-paying clientele how to beat the tar out of Endeavor.

And then a small wrench is thrown in his plan in the form of underground hero Aizawa Shouta, alias Eraserhead, arguably the best coffee customer ever, who's sitting in Izuku's - *Harbinger's* - corner booth. The booth he secured through months of posturing and valuable information exchange. The booth that is absolutely, undeniably his. Well. Tonight is going to be fun.

The bar is a neutral space, meaning information flows unimpeded.

Group to group, person to person, hero to villain, villain to hero. No lies, no snitches, no consequences, no issues, end of story.

It also means that whatever he overhears is fair game, and Izuku overhears a lot. He connects dots, he sees patterns, he analyzes quirks. It's what makes him so damn useful in the little spot of grey in the world - which is most likely why Eraser is here, tonight, and why he's sitting in Izuku's booth.

And so he falls into the persona he uses here, and makes his way slowly up to the bar. Where he walks, conversations stutter and halt, and eyes fall upon him - some wary, most interested, all calculating.

"Hello, darling," he drawls to the bartender. Dabi, who's employed under Izuku, is what he would consider an absolute sweetheart. Terrible scars kiss up his throat, crawling onto his jaw and resting under the skin of his eyes. It's the markings of an assault perpetrated by a pro hero - information Izuku had to twist and wring out of the man. It's why he hates Endeavor. It's why he keeps an eye on the Todoroki family. Dabi tilts his head and grins.

"Hey there, hotstuff. Your usual?"

"Oh, darling, you know me so well." Izuku leans against the counter, completely relaxed. His elbows rest against the polished wood and his palms support his chin as his eyes follow the path of Dabi's hands; a cathartic little habit of his. And a way to keep Eraserhead waiting, seeing as he sat down in Izuku's spot without asking first.

Dabi sets Izuku's water down on the bar and leans forward enough to brush his hair against the small vigilante's hood. His right hand lifts up and falls onto Izuku's covered cheek, warm and firm.

"He's been here for about two hours. I don't know why, but I did tell him about waiting for you until he sat down. Careful over there, flower. He's a wicked little thorn."

Izuku pats Dabi's hand and pulls back, grabbing his water as he makes his way towards Eraser. Sliding into the seat opposite him - the seat facing the bar - Izuku tilts his head and stirs the iced water with his straw. It's time to see what he can do to help his favorite hero. His eyes sweep the pro up and down, catching on the little things - the things he doesn't get to see regularly. The flash of red between yellow goggles, erasing a quirk Izuku doesn't have. The slight lift on hair that really shouldn't be defying gravity right now. The scarf that Izuku wants to sink his claws into.

"Well, won't you come into my parlor?" he drawls, grinning a grin that Eraser can't see. "Please, when you leave, think about tying up your hair. It's an awfully obvious tell."

Aizawa Shouta blinks and his hair falls. Hopefully he's impressed.

Hopefully he's wary.

"I've heard that you know things you probably shouldn't," he says. Izuku hums a non-answer, pulling the straw up under his mask to take a sip. "You're not especially hard to find, for someone who supposedly knows too much."

Izuku almost chokes on a laugh. He leans back and folds his hands in his lap, under the table. "If I was hard to find, how would I be able to help out the good people of Musutafu? Information needs a space to flow freely, dear. That's how my business works."

Eraser nods slowly. Izuku stares unblinkingly through his own goggles, picking apart the man in front of him. Insomniac. Married. Overworked, but not underpaid. He's got cats. He's preparing for a sidekick. Interesting, but nothing he doesn't already know.

"Ask me your question, friend. But first," Izuku pulls his pen and notepad from where they're stowed under the table, "can you give this," he scribbles down some notes, "a look?" Izuku tears the paper away from the notebook and passes it to the Eraser. It's notes on how he could improve the way he uses his quirk, the improvements he could make on his gear, and the address of the minute-mart where Izuku buys all of his hairbands for Eri.

Eraser looks up. "Just so we're clear, this isn't what I came here for. I'm not paying you for this."

Izuku nods. "I know, don't worry. I don't want money for that. All I ask is that you seriously consider what I've put down on that paper. I think it'll help just in general. Now you can ask what you wanted to ask."

Eraser folds the paper and tucks it into his scarf. "I wanted to ask about the Shie Hassaikai murders, but from what I've heard, you won't answer any of those questions?"

Izuku shakes his head, smiling sweetly under his mask. "Nope," he chirps. "I'm emotionally invested in Detective Tsukauchi solving that one without me. Sorry. But anything else, I can get you. I mean," and

he leans forward and flattens his voice, “for the right price, of course.”

“Okay. What can you tell me about the League of Villains? It’s a name I’ve heard popping up all over the underground, and I need to know if they’re a real threat.” Eraser leans forward a bit as he talks, and Izuku leans forward in turn.

“I could tell you a lot of things about the league, Eraser,” he drawls. “I could tell you, for instance, about how they’re performing genetic experiments on at least three missing persons, twisting them all up into one big terrible mess.” Eraser’s eyes widen behind his goggles. “I could tell you about the member with an unregistered warp quirk that can transport as many people as he wants to.” Izuku begins to lean forward more now, letting his excitement take the reins. “I could tell you about the figurehead of the group, a little boy with a disintegration quirk he’s terrified of.” Izuku’s hands are bracing him now, holding him up as he lifts off his seat to get closer to Eraser, who is as still as a statue. “I could tell you about the man who picked him up off the street and played around in his head until he was a good little puppet, the *best* little puppet.”

Izuku’s pelvic bone is crying out in discomfort, braced on the edge of the table as Izuku leans forward the rest of the way. Eraserhead isn’t breathing as Izuku’s mask brushes his ear.

“I could tell you about the man who’s called All for One, the way they call him *Sensei*,” he whispers, relishing the way that the quiet chatter around them falls away to the silence of the underground hero.

He pulls back suddenly and sits back down, pulling on the straw of his water to take another sip. He pointedly does not look at Eraser, instead letting his eyes rove the full tables around him.

“Of course, my price for that kind of information would be high,” Izuku hums. “I’d need a large sum of money for so much. Or maybe a favor. I’d like a favor. Or something I don’t already know.” His head falls to the side. “I’d like to learn something tonight.” By now, Eraser has had more than enough time to school his features back to something resembling professional, so Izuku turns back to him.

He’s right. Eraser is expressionless and his breathing is back to normal.

“So how would you like to pay?”

Eraser’s head tilts forward, and he looks at Izuku with wonderfully

calculating eyes.

"I doubt I know anything you don't, and I don't think I have enough money to pay for the kind of information you're talking about, so I guess I'll have to owe you a favor. Call it in when you like."

Izuku shivers and grins, not that Eraser can see it.

*"Wonderful,"* he purrs. He twirls his pen and jots down an address, one he knows like the back of his hand. "I'll have a folder waiting for you here, with everything a sweet city boy like you could ever want. Pick it up in two days, at your usual time." He relishes the way Eraserhead stiffens. "The owner will know it's yours."

Izuku is finished for tonight. The man nearest the bar has been going on about his endeavors with a woman who is very much not his wife, and Izuku doesn't want to hear about any more of that. He's the only one talking about something new, so Izuku can't very well tune him out, which is a shame and a headache.

He tears the paper out of his notebook and sets it in front of Eraser, written-on side down, and gets up to leave. He allows himself a glance, and he's probably a bit too smug at the shaken look on the pro's face.

On the paper is the address of the café Aizawa frequents, a little no-name place run by a teenager and his ward.

Izuku leaves the bar with a wave to Dabi, and goes home to Eri.

#### Chapter End Notes

I'll be posting the next story soon, and I'll be adding to this periodically, so don't run away just yet! I hope you like this!

# Addendum I - 45 Minutes

## Chapter Summary

The first addendum. Takes place in the first chapter, requested by GoGoPowerTazer; a closer look at Izuku as he works his way through the Shie Hassaikai compound.

**WARNING:** Graphic depictions of violence. I will add the tag if asked. This one's... kinda gnarly. Izuku isn't a happy camper here, and he lets quite a few people know.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Midoriya Izuku screws the silencer onto his pistol and checks the magazine, of which he has multiple. He's expecting around 200 people to be in the compound, all in various states of work, recreation, and sleep. His first marks will be Chisaki Kai, alias Overhaul, and Kurono Hari, alias Chronostasis. He has a VIP act planned for those two, and in the pocket of his hoodie, his hand brushes against the stiletto knife.

In his messenger bag is all of his ammo, with more than enough room for anything he finds and wants to keep.

Izuku slips in through a window left open from a smoke break. From the map of the compound he's made and memorized, he knows that he has to go down the right hallway and take a left if he wants to get to Chisaki's room. The room he's in is empty, and he knows that patrols come around every eight minutes.

Good. It gives him time to take out the big bad before anyone notices. After that, he'll take care of everyone else.

He makes his way down the hallway with silent steps, keeping the edges of the halls - that way, any creaking of the floorboards is minimized. After all, this is an old minka\*.

It's easy to find Chisaki Kai's room. It's easier to slip in, because the man is dead asleep. It's even easier to shut the door behind him, pull out the stiletto, and position it over the man's eye.

It's infinitely harder to actually do it. To kill this man.

But he has to. To save a little girl, he has to kill this man, Chisaki Kai, and Kurono Hari, and everyone else who's hurting her.

He *has* to.

And so he does, and the pop of the eye makes him want to throw up. The *shlup* as the knife sinks deeper, and then the gentle thud as the tip hits the back of the skull.

Chisaki Kai jerks once, and then he doesn't move ever again. It's a terrifying thing, and then all emotions, all doubts, leave Izuku.

Now that it's over, he realizes how simple it is to kill someone. How easy it is to snuff out a light.

And he's gonna do it again, and again, and again, and however many times it takes.

He'll be fine.

But he has to move quickly. Next is Kurono Hari.

It's easier, now that he knows what to expect. He wipes the blade on the bedsheets, and puts it into the bag, now that he's done with it. He'll have to dump it in a river somewhere, or maybe bury it in the woods. That's a decision for future Izuku, though, because now it's time to use the gun he's been practicing with for the past four months.

The first shot he makes whispers as it finds its place in the chest of a man alone in a room. The silencer does its job wonderfully. He makes his way through rooms, not giving anyone enough time to even shout before they find a bullet somewhere important. Most of the people are sleeping when they die. Those who aren't are either playing card games, eating, or having sex. Izuku doesn't mind much what they're doing, only that they stop doing it. Empty magazines make their way back into the bag, switched out for full ones.

The patrol that comes every eight minutes isn't actually prepared for an intruder, which makes his job much easier, and then he's done with the minka proper. Now it's time for the labs, which lie underneath.

*He has to be quick. He can't risk anything going wrong. He can't risk her.*

These people are easier to kill, because Izuku knows that they have an intimate knowledge of what Kai does to the little girl (there is a type of familiarity that falls between the killer and the killed, and one piece

of that familiarity is the given name). Anyone who willingly and willfully works with and enables a child abuser is morally reprehensible, and Izuku treats them as such. It's almost awful, how easily the hesitation has left him. But it's not a problem, because he won't dwell on it, and anyways. It's not like anyone will be left to remind him.

It's a bit difficult to keep a path free of bodies or blood, but he does it anyways. He doesn't want to scare the little girl any more than absolutely necessary. He checks every nook and cranny of the labs for more yakuza, finding none. It seems that there's no one other than her being kept prisoner, so he puts a bullet in every person who isn't in the room of the little girl.

There's a distinct difference in the ratio of masculine to feminine yakuza, he notices. Must be a villain thing. He pushes the thought out of his head; he's here to kill, not to debate the gender gap in villainy or its causes and effects.

It takes 45 minutes, and he takes somewhere around 150 people. That's 3.3 repeating people a minute, he muses. It sounds about right, and then he's unloading the gun and shoving it into his bag. He's made a point to get as little blood on himself as possible, and the black will take care of anything that splashed (not that he got close enough for any splashing, other than with Kai and Hari).

He brushes himself off, and looks at the door. It's plain. This is it. This is why he's done this awful thing. He'll save her.

*It's worth it, his heart screams as it splinters.*

He takes a deep breath and places his hand on the doorknob, twisting it open.

\* - a *minka* is the name for a traditional Japanese house

## Chapter End Notes

lmao this was kinda wild to write?? tell me what you guys think

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